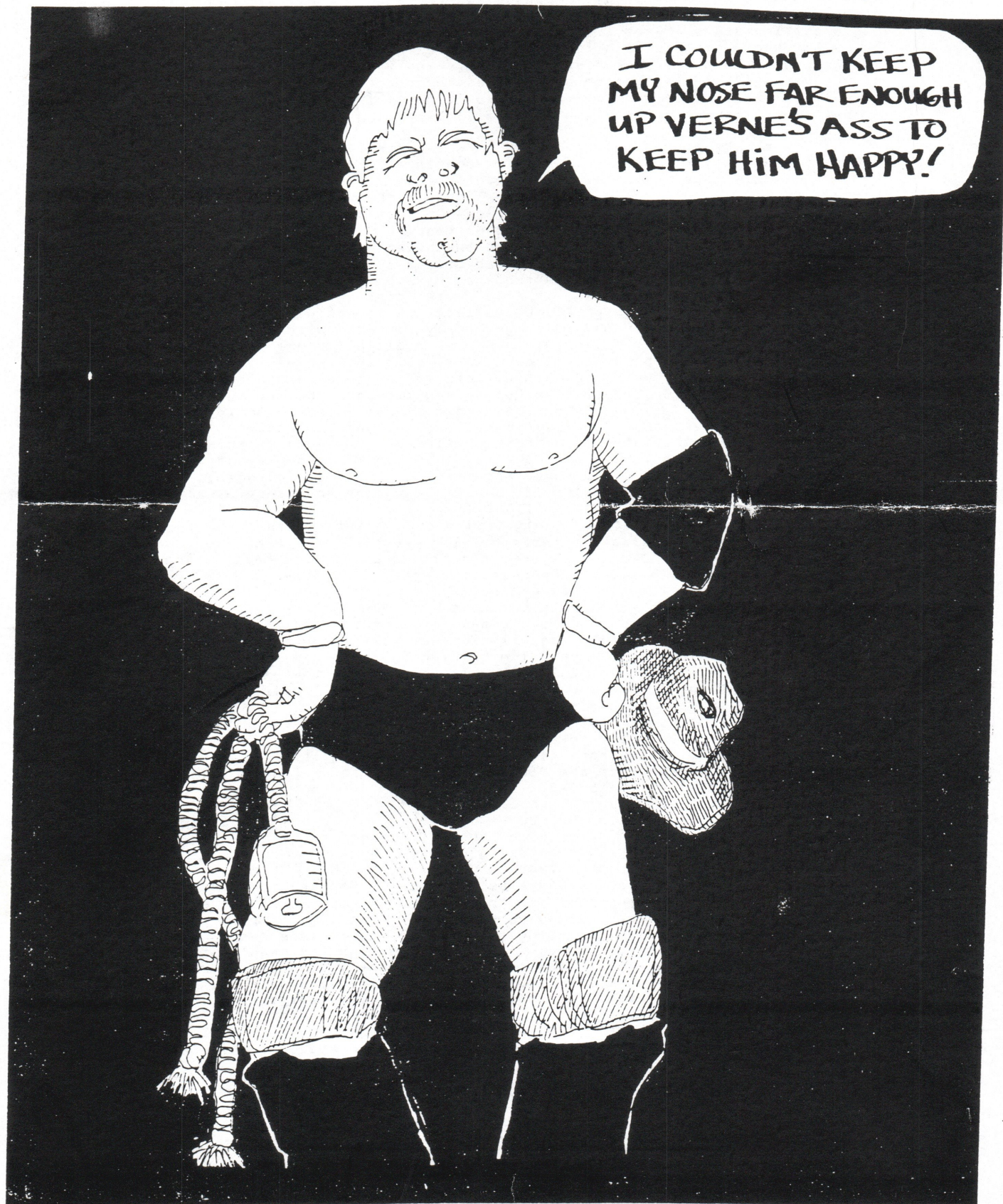


CHAIRSHOTS

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SHOOTKICK

by Jeff Bowdren

I love going to indy shows. There's something so delightfully perverse about watching a bunch of guys, most of whom have absolutely no chance of going anywhere else, trying to pretend like their big wrestling stars. Big wrestling stars. Geez, is that an oxymoron or what? Anyway, I've got a big boot to the side of the head for local indy promoter Rusty Brooks. Now there are some of you out there who may never have heard of Rusty. Well, let's just think of it as Chairshots attempt to become more Torch-like. (Aaaahhhh!) What we won't be giving you is the exclusive 12-part interview with Rusty. What we will be giving Rusty is this month's Shootkick

So I get the phone call from my boy "Whispering Bob" Mitchell and he tells me their will be a wrestling extravaganza at the Ft. Lauderdale YMCA. Phone calls are made, plans are finalized, and it looks like an evening of raising hell is all set to go. Then I get another phone call, this one from out beloved (?) editor, Mister I-need-a-change-in-my-lifestyle-so-I'm-moving-to-New-York-himself, who informs me that there seems to be some problems with our appearance at the card that evening. Promoter extraordinaire Rusty Brooks, who's last card we attended drew a turnaway crowd of something like 115 or so, not counting those that may have been in the upperdeck seats at the roller rink that evening, is a tad upset that we will be there, because and get this folks, we'll probably be yelling kay-fabe stuff! Us?!?! Actually my first reaction was to be genuinely pissed. With the crowds that he usually draws, I could be in the front row calling his mama a crack whore and he should be glad to see me. Barry said that he was at first undecided about going, but, seeing how there may be some heat between the boyz and the gang at Chairshots, by God we had a responsibility to be there! Hell, Flaherty said he might even control his liquor intake! So we walk into the vast & cavernous YMCA, yea right, and we can't help noticing that we can count the number of people there, I kid you not, and I'm thinking to myself that big Rusty had some major cajones (look it up) for not wanting us here when no one else seems to be appearing either! In fairness, a rather respectable crowd of about 125 people showed up and pretty much filled up the YMCA, although they probably could've drawn that if they had a Tracey Lords film fest that night also. So naturally the ring announcer who's mic isn't working right, starts talking about angles that have happened at cards in other cities (yea right) and gives more heat during the intro to the ref (Steve...."Cadillac"....Jones!!) than he did to the guys working the match! Getting back to Cadillac, it was pretty weird that this guy looked like he could've been John Hitchcock's brother. It's pretty frightening that there are people out there that look like John, but the other thing that was hilarious is that throughout the night the guy kept grabbing his crotch. I'm talking full frontal crotch grab. So naturally I decided to point it out. To the entire crowd. What a guy.

The other thing I love about indy shows is the goofy names on the card. How about "Jimmie Torture, Irish Pat McGuire and of course, from the old school of wrestling names....Al "Moose" Jones (Obviously a former fan of the always innovative AWA). So anyway, later in the show we get our big main event of Rusty & "Soulman" Alex G. vs. Vampire Warrior & Cliff Anderson, who reputedly is a member of the "famous" Anderson Bros. Even though he has the name misspelled on the back of his jacket (It's an indy card!!) I also wondered why the Vampire, who is alledgedly one of the undead, had to wear a wrap around his thigh. Do vampires get pulled muscles? Just wondering. So here we are, and we're generally being pretty nice guys, rooting for the faces and all and trying our best not to be bad hardcores, even though I remembered at the last card that Rusty, Mr. Doesn't-want-the-hardcores-at-his-shows, took a bodyslam and then looked at us and said, "Well guys, that was my one bump for the night". Anyway, the heat between us and big Dusty, er Rusty, seemed to have been blown out of proportion by Pete, who had a reputation for doing things like that, since Rusty was generally pretty decent towards us. Lucky for us Flaherty hadn't started drinking yet or all hell could've broken loose. But I'll stand by my Shootkick because apparently Rusty did have a problem with us showing up there because of his apprehension that we might in some way violate kay-fabe. Hey Rusty. Let me give you a piece of advice. Something that our beloved editor once told me. There is no such thing as bad publicity. Publicity, good or bad, is still publicity. If we hadn't shown, besides losing some paying customers, you cost yourself & some of the boys the chance to get

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SMOKY MOUNTAIN HOTSPOTS

BY TIM WHITEHEAD

It's time for yet another intriguing edition of Smoky Mountain Hotspots™, the most bestest and most interestingest Smoky Mountain column in the business (I won the History award in college but I ain't got no idea why they didn't give me the English award).

I'm writing this a day before the kickass, uh, make that kickoff card for Golden Week in Marietta, GA. Billed as the "Armstrong Family Reunion", the card will also feature WWF stars Lex Luger and Owen Hart. Owen will be a sure bet for "Best Heel" in this year's awards balloting if about 312 other wrestlers suddenly decide to retire. Lex is so excited about his first appearance on an SMW card that he began hallucinating at a WWF TV taping up in Pennsylvania, imagining that he's the WWF World Champion. But as far as I'm concerned, the biggest event of Golden Week will be the debut of The Thrillseekers (Lance Storm & Chris Jericho), an excellent Canadian team who have quite a bit of foreign experience, and by foreign I mean places like Japan and Mexico, as opposed to Canada itself which is more like another planet. Jim Cornette seemingly plans to build the promotion, on the babyface side, around this team, so it'll be interesting to see if the new guys click with the fans. Cornette is using music videos to slowly preview the team to the TV audience. The first of these videos ("We're Gonna Rock America") was one of the most effective debut videos I've ever seen. Shot in the area resort towns of Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge, the video probably cost very little to produce yet it achieved its stated purpose of putting the team's image over. Compare that to other wrestling promotions who spend \$150,000 and turn out a piece of crap so bad it makes a Hulk Hogan movie look like "Henry V". The second video, however, cast serious doubt on the Thrillseeker's status as babyfaces by featuring local hardcore fan Heather Norton, who is most definitely a heel fan.

This one's for Dave Scherer: Is it just me, or is Chris Candido emerging as one of the best wrestlers in the sport today? At the 2/26 house show at Johnson City's Freedom Hall, the "Suicide Blonde" impressed even hostile babyface fans when he used a frankensteiner off the top rope on Tracy Smothers. And Candido's "crybaby" gimmick is hilarious! Prior to the match, Candido complained that his U.S. Jr. Heavyweight Title shouldn't be on the line because Tracy was obviously above the 230 lb. maximum weight. He then produced a Toledo™ scale and called upon the ref to conduct a weigh-in. The ref (Brian Hildebrand, one of the most devious and underhanded officials in the business) claimed Tracy only weighed 228, but in actuality that Toledo scale registered "Holy Toledo" when Tracy stepped on it.

WWF/SMW update: Many months have now passed since Jim Cornette agreed to form a working arrangement with Titan. One would be hard pressed to think of any real benefit SMW has gotten out of this relationship. The four shots the Steiners worked back in October was nice and they had some very good matches with the Heavenly Bodies but they didn't exactly pop the gate. In fact, SMW's most impressive gates to date, such as Sunday, Bloody Sunday and K-Town Showdown, have featured no WWF talent. Increasingly, SMW wrestlers are having to put over the WWF regulars when they appear on Titan cards. And it's difficult to reconcile Cornette's hardcore heel manager routine here in the SMW territory with the far less effective character he portrays in the WWF. Still, there's no hard evidence that the Titan deal is turning local fans away, either. For the most part, the local fans here pretty much ignore the WWF.

Reportedly some hardcore fans who have travelled to this area to see SMW live have left disgruntled, not because of anything that happened in the ring, but because they weren't allowed backstage to hang with the wrestlers. Some who managed to get backstage found themselves politely but firmly ordered out by arena security. I can understand the desire to get backstage, particularly if you've come a long distance and you really want to meet your favorite wrestler or manager, but in reality being a hardcore doesn't entitle someone to any special backstage privileges. If I went up to Philly to see an ECW card I wouldn't expect Tod Gordon to welcome me backstage with open arms because I'm a lifelong wrestling fan who came a long way to see his show. Admittedly, it'd be cool if he did but I have no right to expect that. On rare occasions, I've went backstage after an SMW show to deliver a tape or a copy of this newsletter to someone, but personally I'd rather watch the action in the ring than hang out in a dressing room. After all, these guys have a job to do.

Here are some random observations:

- **Dutch Mantel says he loves to watch females fight, proving he's got impeccable taste.
- **They need to use K.C. O'Connor on TV more, particularly in angles which require major bumps, or maybe an Onita-style blade job.
- **Is Barry Rose really moving to the Big Apple, or is this just an angle like the one they did with Dirty White Boy last year?
- **Shoney's™ really is a great place to grab a bite, either before or after an SMW card.

See ya next issue!

CHAIRSHOTS

GUEST

WRITER

More exciting than a table dance, more powerful than Bastion Booger's smell. It's.....

WHAT
PISSES ME OFF!

I promised that I would mention my friend TAMI in this column. So I did. I feel better.

by Wade Ratliff

Have you ever had a girlfriend who made you feel like you were worth a million bucks one second; then she just infuriates the piss out of you the next? If you have, you can identify with what I'm going through with Jim Cornette. No, he's not my girlfriend and I've never entertained thoughts of homosexuality; yet he's taken me to the point of sheer "wanna punch him in the mouth one minute, the next I'm laughing at his interview" madness that I can not stand it anymore. Jim, we're through! So, in my personal tradition that so many ex-whatevers in my life find so endearing, I'm basically gonna haul out the old jimmy and let the yellow stream rain down all over Corny.

At the beginning of 1993, I could count on one hand the number of people who would never sell out to the WWF. Jim Cornette was at the top of the list. He stated in and on various interviews that he had no interest in joining the folks at Titan. "I'm happy where I am. I want to concentrate on Smoky Mountain Wrestling." were a couple of his favorite quotes. Then my phone rings one night and "Jim Cornette debuts at the next Monday Night Raw" greets my ear drum. Huh? Did I enter some weird parallel universe where nothing makes sense? No. JIM CORNETTE HAS JUST SOLD OUT!!

Cornette backers will point to the fact that Jim isn't on the road full time with the WWF. He makes so many thousand dollars just for one shot, managing Yokozuna, at Wrestlemania X. I can not condemn the dollars he earned, but if money is the over riding factor governing your thought process... Well, we know what that means. If you sell your body for money, that's prostitution. If you sell your managerial and interview talents to an organization that you supposedly have a laundry list of differences with that, gentle reader, is selling out. Plain and simple, cut and dried it's whoring for the biggest pimp on the block. And it's not just whoring, it's the shilling for the other whores that bothers me more. The name Jim Cornette has baggage attached to it, admittedly not as much to the WWF fans who are blissfully ignorant that there is no wrestling besides the Fed, whether good or bad that swings a big bat in the baseball diamond called wrestling fandom. If the fan enjoys Jim Cornette, then they will be inclined towards whoever Cornette thinks is cool; and the opposite holds true also. Jim Cornette is a big-named whore who can make money off his moniker. Now for a few bucks, the WWF can too. Give me a S, give me an E, give me a L, give me another and so on...

So the "Guiding Light of Smoky Mountain Wrestling" gets on the mic his first night in, does a few obligatory insults towards Lex Luger and company, and then he just shills big time for people he's not even involved with like the good little toady he's being paid to be. Just leave the money on the dresser and come back anytime, Vince. Remember all the talk about the big talent trade? Well, what did SMW get out of the swap? They got the Steiners for at least one match and uh..uh..hmm. Well, they did get SMW mentioned on WWF nation wide telecasts. Gee, I wonder how many of those fans who heard about it went searching for the elusive SMW weekly show. Not more than a dozen. You have to realize the WWF fan mindset. If it doesn't happen in the WWF, it didn't happen. The main force behind the large attendance of Sunday Bloody Sunday was the story lines. No mentioning of SMW on Superstars will bring that many fans to a show. And correct me if I'm wrong but there aren't half as many plugs as there used to be.

What else has Mr. C done to wrinkle my blanket? Oh, let's just bring up the race riot in Wise Virginia, shall we? Many people have tried to justify Cornette's part in the whole sorry mess. Not being one to trample on the right to free speech, I'll accept it as his view on society and proclaim that he has a right to express it. Just as I have a right to raise holy hell about the damn thing. James, it was a stupid, stupid thing to do. I would be more embarrassed about that than anything I've ever done. (Let's give a close second to Prince Kharis.) There are a zillion ways to create heat. You are a master of it. So, why in the wide wide of Gumby would you resort to using a racial slur? Because he's been so deeply buried in the world of kayfabe, that he forgot to respect his customers. Because he's as behind the times as Bill Watts. Because he can do something like that and get away without a bunch of scathing editorials directed towards him by the underground press. I.E.: The wrestling sheets.

There were a couple of people who stood up and said it was wrong but for the most part the big name hardcore fans stayed the hell out of the situation. Whether it be on account of a friendship with Cornette or a blind faith in him, very few letters poured into the readers pages. Very few columns blasting Cornette came forth. Or did the editors not print these letter as a favor to Cornette in order to let the thought die down that Jim may not be perfect? Either everyone agreed with Jim, or didn't think it was a big thing. Maybe not all of you readers and editors are as idealistic as I, but it warranted big time attention. My respect for him dimmed to nil and until there is satisfactory retribution to those fans who were offended, it will not rise again.

Consider this constructive criticism if you will Jim, but you lost a lot of fans by your recent actions. Yes, there will be people who follow you and worship you no matter what you do or say. But you need to think about the rest of the fickle fans. What are you going to look like to them? A racist sellout? Do something now, to make us proud of you again. Don't wait until the damage can not be reversed. Don't wait until all the bridges are burned. Turn back, Jim. Until you do, this is goodbye.

BUMPS & GRINDS

by Mike Terry

By the time you read this, Wrestlemania X will be history. I was in New York on business during Wrestlemania week and hopefully had a chance to meet up with Barry to allow him to show me what he described as "the real New York." Something about an exotic dancer and a snake. I think that's illegal here in Ohio.

Had to fly back home on Wrestlemania afternoon. No choice. Couldn't stay to see the show. I considered stopping by Fan Fest, but at \$22 per ticket, I decided to pass on dunking a Doink clone or standing in the Funeral Parlor.

So what do you think about the new look of WCW? From this critic's corner, they've got sizzle galore, but a cheap grade of beef. Looks great, sounds great, but still nothing to put cheeks in seats. The announce crew is beyond reproach. The production aspects are superb. And I like the way they've re-worked the announce teams and formatics. Except possibly for the Sunday night Main Event show. I just don't know about showing repeats and whether that'll work. It makes sense in that it allows those who wouldn't normally catch all the shows to see the best matches. It also means there's one less show to book each week. But the WWF has had its greatest success going the opposite direction--a "live" show. Seems the folks like that spontaneity and perhaps can take or leave a pre-packaged show. We'll see.

The WCW announce crew sure makes the WWF announce team pale in comparison. It's so bad that even Johnny Polo sounds good. OK--cheap shot. Actually, I think he's getting much better. But did you hear him playing with that sound effects gimmick during the March to Wrestlemania special? Keep it up, and I will actually turn off a wrestling TV show. Folks--you don't know how strong a statement that is from me. The sound effects are not explained properly, thus confuse the audience. Plus--in my opinion, it's "humor" that just falls flat.....on the other hand, hey, Stan Lane! Do a lude, dude. Last month I thought the guy was coming around. Let's reminisce--he started off boring, became pleasant, now he's obnoxious. And I wish somebody'd slap that smile right off his puss. And do you think Vince realizes how much of a loss Bobby Heenan was? I doubt it.

Quotes of da month: Jim Ross on the Power Hour Flashback (2/19) as Sting met Lex Luger: "Sting has just dominated Lex Luger to win the heavyweight championship of the world. And after the first few moments, there wasn't really any doubt that (Sting) was the better man.".....Eric Bischoff and Dusty Rhodes on the Main Event (2/20): Eric: "We're going to see Arn Anderson in action--the Enforcer, if you weel." Dusty: "In puh-lik.".....Johnny Polo on Phil Apollo: "That Apollo really has a great physique. All he's got to do is develop it.".....Rick Rude to Sting: "(You're) a boil on the booty of life and I'm a big dose of Oxy 5.".....Gordon Solie on Jim Steele vs. Rip Rogers: "If it were me, I wouldn't want to be in Mr. Rogers' neighborhood now.".....Polo on Luger: "He's like a man repossessed."

Brain Gems: Heenan on a Paul Roma dropkick: "He could have knocked Fay Wray out of King Kong's hand, he was up so high.".....on whether Bockwinkle really promised a title match to Steamboat: "Bockwinkle can forget things. He can hide his own Easter eggs.".....on the All-Nighter: "Where are my jammies?".....with Gene Okerlund on Main Event: Gene: "You know what they call Hogan on the set of 'Thunder in Paradise'? Hulk 'Hurricane' Hogan." Bobby: "That's because he's a big bag of wind."

I wrote a few months back about Summit Media's partnership with Titan Sports in developing a new program, sort of a martial arts meets the WWF. Well, they pitched it at the national programmer's convention and signed 50 markets in that first week. Apparently lots of Fox affiliates have purchased the show and plan to use it as a lead-in to next fall's NFL football games. By the way, the working title is: "Martial Arts Masters."

And how is it Hulk Hogan can still use that name when Bossman couldn't use his?

I hope all of you enjoyed the WCW All-Nighter as much as I did. I realized for one thing, what a terrific referee Tommy Young was...what fire used to drive Sting in the ring...how much of a waste Barry Windham has made of his life...that no one's better than Jim Ross in calling high-intensity matches and reflecting the tension and suspense the guys in the ring build...what the hell was Eddie Haskell doing as a judge?...and thank God Jason Hervey's not around anymore.

Don't I seem to remember Ric Flair claiming he would never book while he was still on top? Oh well, at least we'll have one great match per card.....and hasn't J-E-double F J-A-double R-E-double T C-double O-L-E-D DOWN?.....finally, has anyone ever seen the Assassin and Chief Jay Strongbow together at the same time? Hmmm...Be good, kids. See you soon.

NERVE ENDINGS

BY PETE LEDERBERG

What's been going on with me the last couple of months? Well, I went from the sublime (2 Billy Joel concerts) to the ridiculous to whatever. Read on. My best wishes to both our vaunted editor and the Blackhearts on their northern "tours". By the way, my columns are not edited by Barry once they leave my hands. For some reason, he wanted that mentioned. I have some experience running fan conventions, and have been made aware of some extreme inequities regarding the conventions and publicity in the "big two" sheets, especially regarding Mike Lano. I spoke with Mike several times on the phone, and he has sent me his convention program, and Evan Ginzburg (he is a good guy-really!) also sent me his review of Lano's convention. For those of you who don't know, Mike Lano ran a Sam Muchnick Tribute Convention in May of 1993. Mike has been accused of being a lot of things: shameless self-promoter, goof, weirdo, lame-o, etc. some of which would certainly apply to a lot of you. Let me tell you one thing about Mike, he is giving back to the boys in the business which is more than I can say for almost anyone else. He has done fundraisers a plenty, is setting things up for payment to be made directly to wrestlers for things that he's doing, and has provided dental care for years to the wrestlers to name but a few ways he's given things back to the boys. The following is a partial transcript of Mike's version of what did and didn't transpire: He thought of doing the tribute in the Summer of 1992. He asked John Arezzi if he was stepping on his toes with an old-timers convention. He asked Dave Meltzer and Wade Keller to read over his brochure/flyer and help in July of 1992. The whole thing was done for charity and a college fund for Barbara Goodish (Bruiser Brody's wife) to which Paul Ellering and Hawk, among others contributed. Meltzer called Lano before Thanksgiving, saying that Mike was out of control here, trying to do too many things. He also said that Mike wouldn't be able to get anyone to come without paying them, to forget about it. Mike did the flier anyway, saying that nothing was guaranteed, because it was for charity and it was wrestling. Meltzer thought it was false advertising, and Wade concurred. Wade asked Lano for a list of people that Lano would stake his life on that were coming. Lano gave the list to Meltzer, which included Lanny Poffo, Bob Roop, Lou Thesz, Red Bastien, and Ernie Ladd among others. Meltzer said there wasn't a chance in Hell of this happening. So Dave and Wade not only didn't give this thing any positive publicity, they warned people to be wary of dealing with Lano (PL: I have a problem here, due to the hypocrisy shown, as these two guys will plug shows and conventions for seemingly anyone who writes in (and plenty of them with questionable reputations), print incorrect results, yet warn people of doing anything with Lano). Anyway, the thing came off. Some of the names in attendance were: Blackjack Lanza, The Hebners, Bob Backlund, Ted Dibiase, Steve Keirn, Mike Rotundo, Toots Mondt's widow, Ox Baker, Ernie Ladd, Rip Hawk, The Conways, Art Thomas, Joe Tangaro, Guy Brunetti, Pepper Gomez, Killer Kowalski, Ivan Koloff, Baron Von Raschke, Sabu, Jimmy Snuka, Stan Hansen, Bobo Brazil, Sweet Daddy Siki & Al Costello. In total, 54 old-timers attended. Mike noted that the WWF actually sent the first guys listed, and that WCW had originally told him to use the May 7-9 dates because they didn't have anything scheduled (through Bill Watts), but by the time he ran it, Watts was gone, and Greg Gagne called to apologize because of Slamboree. Greg claimed that Dusty Rhodes stole Lano's idea, but Mike doesn't hold Dusty responsible for running Slamboree 2 weeks after Mike's convention. However, Mike feels the WWF co-operated more because of WCW. Mike gave out lifetime achievement awards, had a salute to minority wrestlers, and tributes to Bruiser Brody and Paul Boesch's widows. A wrestling marathon was also held. Mike also set up a health fair, with dental, chiropractic/massage, glaucoma and podiatry available-all free! Mike said that he won't run another convention due to all the bullshit, but will help others. When Buddy Rogers died, Mike put together a Buddy Rogers movie with everything available, and even had Bobby Davis doing commentary (it was 8 hours long). Money for this venture went directly to Georgiann Makropoulos and Debbie Rogers to help with Buddy's hospital costs. He is tentatively planning to do a rib book with Johnny Valentine, containing filthy stories about Red Bastien, Eddie Graham, Ric Flair, etc from Johnny's experiences to help Johnny out. Money for this venture will be sent directly to a PO box in Dallas. Mike will not touch the money. I'll keep you posted on this venture as things progress. I'm sending Mike pictures to use for it. I guess my whole problem with all of this is, that here is a guy who certainly gives and is giving something back to the business, and this is the one person singled out for not being trustworthy in and around this business? Please! How would you feel if you did all of this, and not only were ripped apart for trying, but had people undermine a charitable event? Maybe this might explain at least part of the self-promoter part. Wade and Dave may have had reason to doubt some of the tribute beforehand, but where was the coverage, and possibly apologies afterward? That's what burns Mike (and me and many others) the most. I got a very interesting phone call the other day. From that call, I can print that Dave Heath (Vampire Warrior, former Blackheart) challenged Tom Nash (original and current Blackheart): "Any Arena in this country that Tom Nash wants to back up his mouth against Dave Heath in a shoot match, let's do it" and was serious.

Why I Love Bowling

Jeffrey Cohen

Me and the hardcores decided to crash the WWF Fan Festival last Friday. Dub called in sick at the Department of Motor Vehicles. Ray disappeared at lunch. He says he won't get in trouble, but he does this at least once a week. I have plenty of sick days left, so I just started sniffing and sneezing about 11 a.m. and they practically threw me out the door by 1.

We all took a cab over to Madison Square Garden. Grand delusions raced in our heads. "Ah want to get a video of myself calling the main event from *WrestleMania 3*, with Hogan against Andre," Dub drawled. "That wuz the greatest match of all time!" (He knew it was because Gorilla told him so)

"Hell, I just want to meet and marry Madusa, just like Greg and Eddie," salivated Ray. He had a poster of "Alundra Blayze" positioned above his station at the Post Office. To make sure nobody made fun of it, only her head was from the *WCW Magazine* pullout. The rest was from a copy of *Playboy* from 1984.

I was looking forward to meeting all the great superstars of the World Wrestling Federation -- Hacksaw Jim Duggan, Sparky Plugg, not to mention the incomparable Jim Powers.

The cab pulled up and we raced for a side entrance. I had finagled a map of the innards of the Garden complex from my brother, who worked Ranger games part-time. We went through an intricate series of passages, passing the remains of Bob Backlund along the way, until we reached the rotunda. Boy, were we delighted!

"Come on, try the Sumo Wrestling," offered Stan Lane. In the makeshift ring, two overweight beer-swillers who didn't even need the padded suits were flailing around. One of their wives ran a camcorder in delight, wheezing as she sucked on a Lucky.

Over in another corner of the room, Gorilla Monsoon was shilling for the "Beat Tito" exhibit. "Come on, give it a try," he intoned. "Be like every up-and-coming WWF heel superstar and pin Tito Santana on your way to main events and fame and fortune!"

The Dunk the Doink Tank was doing a brisk business. Wade Keller was standing on line with a sack full of fives. Eagerly, he was slapping down sawbuck after sawbuck. Doink Apollo got soaked, then Doink Horowitz. "Bring 'em all on," cackled the craven college youth.

Calling matches was a boom. Vince McMahon was applying another level of Brylcreme to his pate, while calling such classics as Randy Savage versus George Welles (WM2) and Bad News Brown versus Roddy Piper (WM6). "Hey, Vince, we're with you all the way!" shouted Dub. We could swear he twitched noticeably. The mark who was busy doing color commentary for the Demolition-Colossal Connection match looked up and asked, "With you all the way for what?"

Before Vince could call security, we moved on. Howard Stern was busy conducting a taped interview with Luna Vachon. "I hear you date a vampire," he queried. "Why the hell do you beard for the guy with the head tattoos?" She hissed and howled, especially when Stern demanded she take off her top.

Ray had discovered where Madusa was hiding; at a table doing autographs. This proved to be our ultimate

undoing. "Here it goes," he whispered. Ray took a copy of his "Alundra Blayze" poster and dug a small hole in the bottom.

"Not the popcorn trick!" I gasped.

Indeed, Ray was sticking his manlihood through the small opening. He was approaching the table, and Dub and I realized we would not be in time to stop him.

Fortunately, Madusa was in such a fan-induced coma that she signed his pecker with nary a notice. Ray tossed aside the poster and crowed, "I'm never gonna masturbate again!"

Unfortunately, Tony Garea and Rene Goulet, who were acting as assistants in Mr. Fuji's Sushi booth, heard this blue remark and tossed the three of us out on our ears.

Be like every up-and-coming WWF heel superstar and pin Tito Santana on your way to main events and fame and fortune!

"Thanks a lot, pal," I groaned.

"At least you didn't shell out all the money to get in," Dub said.

"You know, we didn't see Meltzer," Ray pointed out. Indeed, the Messiah of the Sheets had not been observed in the crowd.

A beat-up Honda pulled up in front of the Garden. It bore California plates. A short, muscular figure got out in front of us. "David Sammartino!" cried Dub.

It was not the Sammartino heir, but the Dave. We gaped at his countenance -- a Macho Man styrofoam finger, a Razor Ramon t-shirt, and Bret Hart sunglasses. "What's up, Lugeraniacs?" he tee-heed.

"No, oh no!" Dub blubbered.

Ray collapsed against a homeless man, who picked his pocket. "Davey, say it ain't so!"

"It's true, believers," Dave sallied. "When I was in the hospital, I saw the light."

"What about your Japanese bias? It's been as obvious as always," Ray spat.

Dave tittered. "The last couple of months have been written by Steve Sims and Chris Zavisa. They've been ghosting while I've been enjoying myself. I even went to see *Monkey Trouble* this afternoon!"

We went weak at the knees. "Dave, how could this happen? What type of life-altering experience could transform you like this?"

At that moment, Vince McMahon bounded down the steps. "Dave, I've got that Hogan-Andre match cued up."

"Splendid!" squealed Meltzer. And away they went.

The next morning, my *Observer* arrived. Bastion Booger and Iron Mike Sharpe had main evented an indie card in Wildwood, NJ the night before. Dave had given it *** 1/4. I went back to sleep until June.

TURNBUCKLE NOTES: Most of the above piece was fiction. Satire, if you will. I am passing up the Fan Festival, but attending the mighty *WrestleMania* card with editor Barry Rose... I joined America Online last month. I've been browsing the wrestling forums and have been sighted by fellow 'cores Dave(s) Prazak and Sherer. A future article will go into this phenomena more in-depth.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS by Dave Scherer

Well, now that this sheet comes out of New York, the city so great they named it twice, perhaps it's time that I develop an attitude...Went to the wild and woolly ECW show on 3/5 at the Arena/Bingo Parlor. God I love writing that. It was indeed a superlative effort by most involved. Terry Funk is God. His match with Shane Douglas was fantastic and he treated the Philly faithful to the Funk You Moonsault. Bruise Brothers vs Public Enemy "Falls Count Anywhere" match (and aren't ALL ECW matches Falls Count Anywhere?) was great violence. I was sitting in the top row of the bleachers and they again made me bail out when they brought the match into my domain. Road Warrior Hawk got the biggest pop of the night, and also wrestled the worst match. He works so softly that he is completely out of place in ECW, where stiff is the rule. Sabu, who as my Scottish mother in law would say is "sent for," missed a moonsault off of the top rope on Mike Awesome. He landed with a sickening thud on the floor. Paul E. Dangerously ran over to him and appeared, correctly, concerned. They went right to the finish and killed the lights long enough for Sabu to make it to the back. The fact that he did not do his post match table destruction tells me that he was hurting. A pal of mine said that he heard there has been \$4,000 in table/arena damage since ECW started running there. A major high point of the night was the guy I got to sit next too. He was telling great one liners all night and was the antithesis of the average "Deliverance Mutant" ECW fan. The last few shows have had less of the mutant fan too, but the usual gang of idiots were in attendance, including the 2 masked morons who wear hoods for the entire card. Another great thing about ECW is their liberal use of Guns and Roses music. "Welcome to the Jungle" is without a doubt the greatest entrance song in wrestling and I knew the first time I heard "Get in the Ring" that it had a place in the grapplin' world. I hope that Paul E. stays on with ECW. I have been skeptical of Crockett's group since Joe Pedecino said that he obtained a 25 million dollar line of credit for Crockett from a Nigerian backer. You get my point. And speaking of Paul, I feel honored now that he has booked 2 "different" jobbers that have had the surname Scherer. I wrote column ripping ECW and Keith Scherer got his ass kicked regularly. Then, I write a good column about the 2/5 show and suddenly Keith has a "twin brother" Kyle who makes a great showing against Jimmy Snuka on TV and announcer Joey Styles says is far more talented than his brother...Oh, and The Bruise Brothers, who have Nazi SS tattoos on their arms, had them covered with armbands at the 3/6 tapings. Between them and Chacho Herodes, whose valet carried a flag with a swastika on last week's Triple A TV show, I think some of these guys are losing their minds...I saw a handheld of the SMW "Sunday Bloody Sunday" show from 2/13. All of the buildup was really well done and the card delivered. It's great that SMW and ECW are giving fans like myself a product that they can enjoy...I read Wade Keller's comments a few weeks ago that he hoped that Jim Cornette had not focused the camera on a retarded fan on purpose when talking about what lowlifes the SMW fans are. The fact that he would even think that way shows me that the guy is guilty of paralysis by overanalysis. It sets the tone for the entire sheet. And since his sheet is a US journal, why does he have Chris Zavisa writing a Japanese wrestling column? I enjoy Zavisa's pieces a lot, but as I said to my old buddy Jeff Lynch, isn't Zavisa's column in the Torch is like Prince Karis wrestling in Smoky Mountain?...Katuyuki wrote me saying that NTV, which is the network that carries the All Japan TV show, is looking into their association with the group. They say that they have a good audience for the show, but they are having trouble lining up sponsors. It is possible that the show will be canceled, though I am not sure what the chances are. It makes me wonder what would happen if they stopped moving the show around and gave it a better time slot than 1 in the morning...For all of you folks with satellite dishes that watch Triple A on Galavision, and I know that must be a small group, I heard through a pal that Galavision is going to digitally scramble their signal in April, making reception of their signal via dish unavailable. Bummer...Speaking of AAA, the group has entirely too much TV here. Of their 7 hours a week, we're lucky if half of it airs new matches. On the 3/12 show, they aired the first match with Tiger Mask (Koji Kanemoto). He did OK working against La Parka and Jerry Estrada. The show was a one night tag tourney, which Parca's team won in the third fall by DQ on a blind foul. I hate that ending under normal circumstances, but on this show the foul came from Parca on his partner, Estrada. Neither ref even saw the foul and yet they take the rudos word that it occurred and DQ the faces. Heavy Metal had a great move in the match when he was outside the ring on the floor and ran, jumped off of the outside barricade, did a flip in the air and landed, in about the 5th row, on Estrada. Wow...Another thing, for some reason the Mexican promotions take seemingly forever to turn a guy. It seems like Misterioso has been turning rudo since January. Are the Mexican fans that stupid or does the promotion think that little of them? Makes me wonder...I hate the spot that occurs in every one of Octagon's matches where the rudos tie the strings on his mask to the top rope and then beat the tar out of him...You gotta wonder if the AAA braintrust read the sheets when they continually refer to Love Machine Art Barr as "El Gringo Loco." Staying in Mexico, I saw the EMILL debut of Reina Jabuky (Akira Hokuto) on a tape my pal in LA sent me. She works her ass off wherever she is...Some free advice to Mike Tenay: Get the folks at ASPN to move your great "Wrestling Insiders" radio show to either Saturday or Sunday nights. I have talked to pals over the Internet who have gotten the show in the past and most just aren't getting it anymore, as it is getting canceled for live events. On the East coast, most games start by 1 o'clock, which is when Mike's show airs...I haven't seen a Sushi lately. I guess Jeff is loading up his ammo for a WM X edition. And speaking of sheets, I also haven't seen John Clark's "Wrestling Flyer" since the Sabu issue. Hope that John has not pulled a Steve Sims. And Dr. Lucha, even my 3 year old niece can use the phone pal...I really enjoyed the New Japan shows that aired from Sapporo in mid February. I am getting sick of the Skinheads, but having them wrestle in best of 7 series was a pretty good idea. Also, watching Shinya Hashimoto defend the title against Genichiro Tenryu, I saw for the first time, the heart and spirit that the fans there see in him. He is like everyman and fans love that about him...Katuyuki sent me a great tape of old All Japan matches, that aired last month. Lineup includes: Jumbo Tsuruta vs Bruiser Brody from 4/19/88; Stan Hansen vs Giant Baba from 2/4/82; Tiger Mask (Misawa) vs La Fiera from 8/26/84; Terry Funk vs Abdullah the Butcher from 7/18/79; and Ric Flair vs Rick Martel, NWA vs AWA Title from 10/21/85. I would have paid to see the title vs title match back then, and after watching the match I would have gotten my money's worth. I did notice some interesting though. Terry Funk has adapted his game in the years since while Ric Flair still works the same match he worked then. That's why Terry Funk is the greatest US wrestler I have ever seen...Until next time.

Sucker Punch

BY BARRY ROSE



You know the old saying about low expectations and big payoffs. Well, Vince McMahon, pat yourself on the back and take a bow, because you produced one kickass LIVE wrestling event, and in the process have revived my waning interest in the graps! From the Hart Brothers wrestling clinic to the excellent Intercontinental Title ladder match featuring "The Bad Guy" and "The Heartbreak Kid", WrestleMania X was as enjoyable as any live card I've seen in years. Lemme give you a rundown from a live perspective (and don't expect this to be any kind of meta-analysis or anything), and in honor of Vince, I'm rating the matches on the MAC scale. 1 MAC for poor matches, 5 MACS for excellent matches. You get the picture. I attended with fellow 'cores, Alan Cookson and Jeff Cohen. In the dark match, The Heavenly Bodies w/ James E. Cornette (looking like he just stepped off the Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper" album cover with his outfit) beat The Bushwhackers, When Dr. Tom pinned Luke. Nothing special, but better than most dark matches—2 MACS. Jerry Lawler then appeared and got early heat with the ringsiders while his music blared over the MSG speaker system. Little Richard (or was that Johnny B. Badd) arrived arm in arm with Pat Patterson (I swear I'm not making that up!) to the ring to sing a roaring version of "America The Beautiful". Everyone was on their feet, except for Lawler, who I guess stayed in character. Owen V. Bret opened up the PPV with a super match. Owen, quite frankly, impressed the shit out of me. From his super belly to belly suplex off the ropes to his awe-inspiring tombstone piledriver, Owen really shined in his first big PPV match. He should teach a career in how to rejuvenate a stalled career, and sign up about twenty WCW wrestlers in the process. The crowd popped big when Bret gave Owen an amazing superplex. The surprise ending, with Owen pinning his bro cleanly, earned this a solid 4 MACS. Probably the best opener for a WrestleMania, and the second best match on the card. Sy Sperling came out with Howard Finkle and did their little hair routine to almost no reaction whatsoever. Only in America could a guy like Sperling be considered a "celebrity". Bam Bam Bigelow and his "main squeeze" Luna Vachon then defeated Doink and Dink. Pure comedy with a different ending than I expected—1 MAC. Randy Savage faced Crush next in a falls count anywhere match. Highlight during this were the three geniuses behind me discussing the rules for this bout like it was the Saltwater Treaty or something similar. Each one of the morons had different versions of how the match could be won, all completely wrong. Crush won the first fall, and Macho Man won the second and third falls and the match. The unique ending, with Savage hogtying Crush, was creative. 2½ MACS for the match and 1 extra MAC for the finish. A President Clinton lookalike was interviewed next. Anybody else catch the meaning of IRS being there also? Anything for a shot at the Government, hey Vinnie? Madusa beat Leilani Kai next in a bout that received no reaction at all. Technically solid, but lackluster—1½ MACS. MOM then faced The Quebecers in a tag title match. MOM came out with Oscar and got a big pop. Mabel does an impressive spinning roundhouse kick, and is fairly decent for such a large guy. The Quebecers looked good as always and did an impressive double suplex on Mabel. Highlight was watching John Arezzi, wearing a purple sweat-shirt, and looking like a grape with legs, stroll the ringside area. Lame finish—2 MACS. Rhonda "Up All Night" Shearer and Donnie "I Look Like I Have Aids" Wahlberg then made celebrity appearances, with Wahlberg getting the loudest boos of the night. How many times will we have to see this celeb bullshit fail before it's finally done away with? Mr. Perfect was then announced as being the guest ref for the Luger V. Yokozuna Title match and got a good reaction. Luger also came out to a decent reaction, and as usual it died when he started wrestling. Crowd was almost comatose at one point. Yoko's nerve hold on Lex seemed to last about an hour. Actually, Fuji worked harder waving the flag. Luger was eventually DQ'ed by Henning in what seemed to be setting a heel turn for Perfect. I cried tears of joy when Luger didn't get the strap and decided that there must be a god, so I'm devoting my life to religion. Match itself was 0 MACS, but the finish, with Luger leaving strapless, earned it an easy 5 MACS in my book. Next up was Earthquake beating Adam Bomb in less than a minute. ½ MAC for the match and 2 MACS for keeping it short. GOOD BOOKING!! Next we had the best match of the night and the best gimmick match I've seen in a long time, with Razor Ramon facing Shawn Michaels in a Ladder match for both belts. Ramon has really improved 100% in the last year and a half. When Razor pushed the ladder into the ring and Shawn kicked it into his chest, the crowd let out a collective "OOOH!" Ramon took some brutal ladder-shots and Michaels elbowdrop from the ladder was fantastic. Shawn's bump from the ladder into the ropes was awesome. Excellent match with the crowd going wild for the finish with Shawn tied up in the ropes and Ramon winning—4½ MACS. Jennie "90210" Garth and Burt "I saw Sv Sperling earlier" Reynolds were into'ed next. Again, no one cared. That all changed when Roddy Piper was introduced as the special ref for the Bret V. Yoko match. Rowdy got the loudest pop of the night, and it as always was great to see him. The match itself was mediocre with Piper getting over more than anyone else when he knocked out James E. Hart pinned Yoko and the ring filled with babyfaces, including Luger, who should've also turned heel. Owen appeared at ringside, but nothing materialized out of it. 2½ MACS (½ MAC for Piper, and ½ MAC for the title change.) Now, let's see if the Titan Braintrust can keep up the momentum, and in turn produce a good house show.

Also had a chance to meet with a lot of hardcores this week that I had previously never met. Good buddy and CS columnist Mike Terry (hey Terry—the latex body suit is ready!), Alan Cookson, Jeff Cohen, Evan Ginzburg, Eddie Goldman, Steve Meyerson, Gordon Scozarri, Georgiann Makropoulos, and countless others that I'm forgetting. Mike and I spent a few days turning NYC upside down and had a meal in Chinatown that we'll not soon forget. Cookson and I went to the Doral Park Hotel after WM and hung out at the restaurant/bar area as a lot of the workers were there. DiBiase, Savage, Dave Heath and Luna Vachon (Who I took a photo with—kind of ironic, if you know the story!), Shawn Michaels, Deisel, Madusa, Razor Ramon and lots more. The heat with MOM looks legit as no one said a word to MO, who sat alone with his companion. And speaking of companions, the ringrats were out in full force this evening. The best looking one was a seven. Coincidentally, Lawler was no where in sight. Cookson and I kept tradition alive by going to the "Paradise Club" later in the evening., where we both swear we saw Jimmy Suzuki having a blast. Small World. See you guys in a couple of weeks, I'm Outta here!!!

some exposure in the sheets. Remember the old expression "out of sight, out of mind"? It can't hurt your guys to get their names mentioned in one of the dirt sheets. A little exposure never hurt anyone (the obvious exception to this is Michael Jackson). But even the Nancy Kerrigan/Tonya Harding deal. Don't kid yourself with Nancy Kerrigan. This bitch gets a wack across the knee and she's going to make a financial killing from it. Someone wants to give me a wack in the knee and I get a couple of million, come and get me. And just because I'm dieing to know and also because I'm a total dog...Hey guys! You get your choice between that big-toothed Mr. Ed-John Elway looking prissy Boston bitch and that delightfully trashy trailer slut, who you gonna spend the night with? I thought so....Anyway, hey Rusty, we always have a hoot at your shows. Let's live and let live. We're not out to ruin anyone's show. We just want to give you a bunch of crap. Hey, its the American way!

In closing, I have to relate a phone call I got the other night. I won't reveal the name of the guy who called, although I should, mainly just to save him a lot of embarassment.

"Hello" (Me)

"Is Jeff there?" (Him)

"Yeah, this is Jeff."

"Yeah, do you do that 'Chairshots' thing?"

"Yeah."

"Who's the editor? Do you have his phone number?"

"Well, Barry Rose is the editor, but he's moving so I don't know his new number."

"Is he the guy that does the interviews?"

"No, that's Pete Lederberg."

"Well, I think I'd be a really good interview."

"Why?"

"I read one of your issues and I have an idea what your style is like. I've got some dirt on someone."

"Who?"

"Tatanka." (Oooooohhhhhh....what the world is waiting for)

"What about him?"

"I got the guy started in the business and now he won't even return my phone calls."

"I'll get back to you."

I love this. What the hell makes someone think because they got a problem with someone who's gotten some exposure recently that every sheet is dieing to do an interview with them? Don't call us, we'll call you....

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